

National Park System Fun Facts

- ❖ There are 397 units in the National Park System that go from A to Z – Abraham Lincoln Birthplace (KY) to Zion (UT).
- ❖ More than 280 million people visit the National Parks each year.
- ❖ The first National Park -- Yellowstone -- was created in 1872 through a law signed by President Ulysses S. Grant. The cavalry was the first caretaker.
- ❖ The largest living things in the world are in National Parks -- Sequoia trees -- and the world's largest carnivores -- Alaskan brown bears.
- ❖ National Parks have volcanoes, glaciers, white sand beaches, and dinosaur fossils.
- ❖ Russell Cave National Monument (AL) has an almost continuous record of human habitation going back to 7000 B.C.
- ❖ In National Parks you'll find:
 - The highest point in North America -- Mt. McKinley at 20,320 feet (Denali National Park and Preserve, AK).
 - The lowest point in the Western Hemisphere (Death Valley National Park, CA).
 - The longest cave system in the world with more than 3454 miles mapped (Mammoth Cave National Park, KY).
 - A 630-foot-high stainless steel arch (Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, MO).
 - The nation's deepest cave at 1,593 feet deep (Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM).
 - The world's largest gypsum dunefield rising 60 feet high and covering 275 square miles (White Sands National Monument, NM).
 - The world's most massive Doric Column (Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, OH).
 - The deepest lake in the United States at 1,932 feet (Crater Lake National Park, OR).
 - The second and third largest natural bridges in the world (Natural Bridges National Monument, UT).
- ❖ In National Parks you will find grizzly bears, Dall sheep, timber wolves, peregrine falcons, flying fox, Pacific Boa, gray whales, moose, Roosevelt Elk, and Olympic Marmot.
- ❖ Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site (AL) was founded by Booker T. Washington for African American Students in 1881. The students built the brick buildings themselves and the educational institution is still active with a visitor center housed in the George Washington Carver Museum.
- ❖ Two National Parks are located north of the Arctic Circle -- Gates of the Arctic National Park (AK) and the Kobuk Valley National Park (AK).

- ❖ National Parks are home to two tropical rain forests in the National Park of American Samoa, Saguaro cacti (Saguaro National Monument, AZ), 47 thermal springs with year-round temperatures of 143 degrees (Hot Springs National Park, AR), and a coral reef (Biscayne National Park, FL).
- ❖ National Parks have some of the greatest named locations in the world: Valley of the Ten Thousand Smokes (Katmai National Park and Preserve, AK), Great Egg Harbor River (NJ), and Fort Nonsense (Morristown National Historical Park, NJ).
- ❖ Kenai Fjords National Park (AK) has the 300-square-mile Harding Icefield.
- ❖ The oldest intact piece of Russian American architecture is the Russian Bishops House at Sitka National Historical Park in Alaska. It was built in 1842.
- ❖ The largest National Park is Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (AK) at more than 8.3 million acres.
- ❖ The smallest National Park unit is part of a part of an acre in downtown Philadelphia, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial. Kosciuszko boarded in the house at Third and Pine from November 1797-May 1798. The second house provides additional exhibit space.
- ❖ Established in 1878, the Hubbell Trading Post is still an active trading post at Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site in Arizona.
- ❖ Hohokam Pima National Monument (AZ) preserves the archeological remains of the Hohokam culture. Hohokam means "those who have gone" in the Pima Indian language.
- ❖ The best preserved cliff dwellings in the United States can be found in Arizona. Montezuma Castle National Monument has five stories and twenty rooms.
- ❖ National Parks preserve the culture of many Native American people including the Navajo, Hohokam Pima, Kayente Anasazi, Salado, Pueblo, Hopi, Timucuan, Nez Perce, Zuni, Hodats, Mandan, and Chickasaw.
- ❖ National Parks preserve the history of settlement in the United States from Mormon Pioneers (Pipe Spring National Monument, AZ) to a 1691 Spanish Catholic Mission (Tumacacori National Historical Park, AZ) to 1686 French settlers (Arkansas Post National Memorial, AR) to Portuguese explorers (Cabrillo National Monument, CA) to Spanish explorer DeSoto in 1539 (DeSoto National Monument, FL) to French Huguenots (Fort Carolina National Monument, FL) to pioneers who settled the west (Homestead National Monument of America, NE) to the first English colony in North America, 1585-87 (Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, NC).
- ❖ The National Parks have castles: Scottys Castle (Death Valley National Monument, CA), Montezuma Castle National Monument (AZ), and Castle Clinton National Monument in Battery Park in New York City that served as an immigration depot for eight million people from 1855-1890.

- ❖ National Parks preserve the works of great American artists and writers such as:
 - Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site (CA),
 - John Muir National Historic Site (CA),
 - American impressionist John Alden Weir (Weir Farm National Historic Site, CT),
 - Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site (MA),
 - Conservationist, landscape architect and founder of city planning, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Longfellow National Historic Site, MA),
 - Augustus St. Gaudens America's foremost sculptor of the late 19th and early 20 the century (Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, NH),
 - Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (NC), and
 - Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site (PA).

- ❖ Manzanar National Historic Site commemorates the WWII internment of Japanese Americans at the Manzanar War Relocation Center in the Owens Valley of California.

- ❖ Abraham Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt have the most sites named for them:
 - Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site (KY),
 - Lincoln Memorial (DC),
 - Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (IN),
 - Lincoln Home National Historic Site (IL),
 - Theodore Roosevelt Island (DC),
 - Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site (NY),
 - Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site (NY), and
 - Theodore Roosevelt National Park (ND).

- ❖ National Parks are home to a former federal prison -- Alcatraz (Golden Gate National Recreation Area, CA) and a leper colony -- Molokai Island Hansen's Disease Settlement (Kalaupapa National Historic Site, HI).

- ❖ Strange Park Service unit names include Tuzigoot National Monument (AZ) and Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area (CA).

- ❖ The house used by poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1837-1882, while he taught at Harvard is the same house George Washington used as his headquarters during the siege of Boston, 1775-76 (Longfellow National Historic Site, MA).

- ❖ National Parks remember the struggles that have shaped this nation:
 - Minute Man National Historical Park (MA) where fighting erupted on April 19, 1775, and the American Revolution began,
 - Antietam National Battlefield (MD) the bloodiest day in American history, where 23,110 casualties were the result of a 12-hour battle as Robert E. Lee's first invasion of the North was halted by George B. McClellan's Union forces,

- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (DC), recognized the 58,000 men and women who were killed or missing from the Vietnam War,
 - Andersonville National Historic Site (GA), a Civil War prisoner of war camp, commemorates the sacrifices of American POW's in all wars, and
 - The USS Arizona National Memorial (HI), is a living memorial to the men and women who were killed during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.
 - The National World War II Memorial (DC), commemorates the sacrifice and celebrates the victory of the WWII generation.
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- ❖ Fort Pulaski National Monument (GA) took 18 years and 25 million bricks to build and only 30 hours of cannon fire to destroy in 1862, as the defending Confederate garrison surrendered.
 - ❖ The statue of Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, is 19 feet tall.
 - ❖ Brown v Board of Education National Historic Site (KS) tells the story of the 1954 landmark Supreme Court case to end racial segregation in public schools. Linda Brown attended the Monroe School in Topeka and was represented in court by Thurgood Marshall, who later became the first African American to sit on the Supreme Court.
 - ❖ The National Parks include 2,000 miles of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail that stretches from Maine to Georgia, a 37-mile-long barrier island (Assateague Island National Seashore, MD), and a 184-mile-long canal from Washington, DC, to Cumberland, MD (C&O Canal National Historical Park).
 - ❖ Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, is associated with numerous park sites. She assisted soldiers in field hospitals throughout the American Civil War and was at the Johnstown Flood (Johnstown Flood National Memorial, PA). Her home in Glen Echo, MD, was headquarters of the American Red Cross for seven years (Clara Barton National Historic Site, MD).
 - ❖ National Parks preserve sites linked to inventors, such as:
 - Marconi's Wireless Station Site (Cape Cod National Seashore, MA),
 - Thomas Edison's "Invention Factory" and laboratory (Edison National Historic Site, NJ),
 - Wilbur and Orville Wright's December 17, 1903, flight in a heavier-than-air machine at Kitty Hawk (Wright Brothers National Memorial, NC).
 - ❖ 15,000 historic and prehistoric petroglyphs -- Native American and Hispanic images carved on rock -- stretch for 17 miles near Albuquerque at Petroglyph National Monument in New Mexico.
 - ❖ The Statue of Liberty (NY) was a 152-foot-tall copper gift from the French in 1886. Ellis Island, which processed 15 million immigrants to America, opened again in 1990 as the only museum dedicated to the history of immigration.
 - ❖ Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, NY, commemorates the site of the first women's rights convention at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in 1848.

- ❖ The only person to serve as President and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was William Howard Taft, whose home is a National Park Service site in Ohio -- William Howard Taft National Historic Site.
- ❖ 40 million years of the history of mammals is preserved in fossils at the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (OR).
- ❖ The completion of the first transcontinental railroad is celebrated at the Golden Spike National Historic Site (UT) where the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads meet.
- ❖ Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts (VA) can accommodate an audience of 6,786 including 3,000 on the lawn.
- ❖ The "Pig War" of 1859 was one of the events leading up to the final settlement of the Oregon Territory's boundary (San Juan Island National Historical Park, WA).